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THOUGHTS

4

UPON THE

FOUR LAST THINGS:

DEATH; }} HEAVEN;
JUDGMENT; }} HELL.

A

P O E M

In FOUR PARTS.

PART I.

DEATH.



L O N D O N :

Printed for LAWTON GILLIVER at *Homer's Head*
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MDCCXXXIV.

THOUGHTS

ON THE

FOUR LAST THINGS:

DEATH; }
JUDGMENT; }
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HELL.

A

POEM

IN FOUR PARTS.



PART I.

DEATH.



LONDON:

Printed by J. JOHNSON, in Pall-mall.

against St. James's Church in 1794.

1794.



PART I.
DEATH.

DARK to Futurity, in Doubt, and Fear,
Short of *Hereafter's* What, and How, and Where,
Trembling to launch into an unknown State,
Final, immutable, and fix'd as Fate ;
Fond, foolish Man would fain those Thoughts decline, 5
And lose them in false Business, Sports, or Wine.
But *can'st* thou lose them? Seest thou not, each hour,
Age drop like Autumn-leaves? Youth like a Flow'r
Cut down? Do Coffins, Graves, and tolling Bells
Warn thee in vain? In Palaces, and Cells, 10
The Heights of Life above, the Vales beneath,
In Towns, and Fields, we every where meet Death.

Dull! trite! insipid! crys the Critick's Phlegm ;

* *Mors omnibus communis* — Children's Theme —

Why, Children die ; and, Critick, so must Thou ;
And so must I ; tho' None knows When, or How ;
Soon it must be ; and That is all we know.

15 }
}

* *Death is common to All ; Or, We must All die.*

Must

Must Death (while Life is so much over priz'd)
 Because 'tis thus familiar, be despis'd?
 Neglected, because certain? when our Bliss, 20
 Or Woe succeeds? What Turn of Mind is This?
 Oh! but the Image present Mirth destroys:
 Suppose That true; it leads to endless Joys.
 Must we indulge no Thoughts, but such as please?
 And sacrifice our Safety to our Ease? 25
 But 'tis *Not* true: The Vertuous, and the Wise
 Have more Enjoyment than the Fools of Vice:
 And Nothing more to make us Good can tend,
 While Life endures, than Thinking on its End:
 By That no present Happiness is lost; 30
 He fears Death least, who thinks upon it most.

Ev'n to the Best indeed, with brandish'd Dart,
 This King of Terrors will some Fear impart:
 Adverse to Nature This much-dreaded Foe
 Makes Nature bend beneath the threaten'd Blow. 35
 Thus much of Sin Original remains
 Still unatton'd: Sad Sicknefs, Languor, Pains,
 Physicians, Med'cines, weeping Babes and Wife,
 Parting with dearest Friends, and sweet, sweet Life:
 Darknefs *behind*, as Pain and Tears *before*: 40
 But soon the melancholy Scene is o'er.

Ev'n

Ev'n while it lasts, Joy intermix'd with Grief
Refreshes him, and Conscience brings Relief.
Smiling he kens the happy Realms above,
Blest Regions of eternal Peace, and Love :
His Saviour, while in Air his Sighs exhale,
Consoles, and guides him thro' the gloomy Vale ;
Faithful Creator ! His firm Staff and Rod
Supports the Soul incumbent on its God.

45

Not so the Wicked ; Hell is in his Breast ;
He shakes, and shudders at the dire Arrest.
Stinging Reflection, while he yields his Breath,
Adds Point and Venom to the Shaft of Death :
He sees the Gulf, and shivers on the Brink ;
Nature, and Guilt, and Conscience backwards shrink :
Or if the Wretch obdur'd, and stupid dies ;
He sleeps indeed, but Hell unseals his Eyes.

50

55

Of Both the Bodys cold in Earth are laid ;
Their Souls to diff'rent Seats, or States, convey'd.
Thou seest a Corps with fun'ral Pomp inurn'd :
How great the Man ! With how much Splendor mourn'd !
Seest with his Own his Wife's Escutcheon join'd,
And gilded Banners flutter in the Wind ;
The Herald's Art ! much gaz'd at, understood
By few ! But was he Vertuous, Wise, and Good ?

60

65

If so ; This hurts him not : But if Unjust,
 Abandon'd to base Av'rice, Pride, or Lust ;
 What boots this Pageantry ? With joyful Howl
 Infernal Spirits seiz'd his parting Soul.
 Which Now, or in a dismal Dungeon bound, 70
 In Chains of Darknes, in a Den profound,
 With Millions like Herself, despairing groans :
 Or, if at large, with piercing fruitless Moans,
 Low, near to Earth, her former dear Delight,
 Fills the dun Air, and shrieks thro' Shades of Night : 75
 Hovers around the wretched Coarse she left,
 And fain would enter : Of That Hope bereft,
 Strip'd of her Body, naked, and forlorn,
 She scuds away, and dreads the rising Morn :
 No Objects finds to gratify her Sense, 80
 Herself almost a Body, gross, and dense ;
 Yet not enough, her Appetites to please ;
 She knows no Interval of Rest, or Ease.
 Imaginary Bags of Gold she clasps ;
 In vain ; 'tis empty Air alone she grasps : 85
 Lust she'd indulge ; but is with Thinness curst :
 Would drink ; but, tho' immortal, dies for Thirst.
 Her black and dev'lish Passions, night and day,
 Pride, Malice, Rage, and Envy, on her prey.

Herself

Herself already to herself a Hell, 90
 She trembles in those sulph'rous Flames to dwell;
 With Horror waits the last tremendous Doom
 Of fiercer Pains, and Torments yet to come.

A diff'rent Fate the Just Man's recent Ghost
 Attends: He, landing on the New World's Coast, 95
 (Fertile of Wonders, glorious to behold!)

Looks back with Joy, and Triumph, on the Old.
O Death, he cries, (her Pow'r he now can brave)

Where is thy Sting? Thy Victory, O Grave?

He smiles, reflecting on the Pride of Kings; 100

And Angels bear him on their purple Wings

To Mansions of celestial Peace, and Rest:

Death is to Him, who dies but to be blest,

A Gate from This to a far better Life,

Free from all Pain, and Sorrow, Cares, and Strife. 105

We, viewing his pale Body spoil'd of Breath,

And all the new Dishonours wrought by Death,

Contemplating his Fun'ral now prepar'd,

His Grave just sunk, or the dark Vault unbarr'd,

His fable Chest, and what We call his *End*, 110

Abfurdly *pity* our departed Friend:

Alas! He pities *Us*; whom Here he leaves

In This sad Vale of Tears; whom Life deceives

With

With vain false Hopes ; who labour, here below,
 With unsubstantial Joys, and solid Woe : 115
 He bids us for Ourselves more justly grieve,
 And sighs to see the wretched Death we live.

Himself or in a blisful Region dwells,
 Which *Virgil's* feign'd *Elysium* far excels ;
 A *Paradise* more pleasant now can boast, 120
 Than That which Man's first Disobedience lost ;
 An *Eden*, which should ev'n great *Milton* paint,
 His strongest Colours would be dead, and faint :
 Where all the Good departed hence enjoy
 Ineffable Delights, which never cloy. 125
 Or blest in State alone, unfix'd to Place,
 Ranges the infinite Expanse of Space ;
 Obstructed by no Boundaries, or Bars,
 Expatiates thro' th' unnumber'd Worlds of Stars ;
 Sees how barb'd Comets shake their fiery Hair, 130
 How Planets, hung on Nothing, spin in Air :
 Of plain Effects the latent Causes views ;
 How Hail is moulded, and how rise the Dews :
 How blended Elements unite in Strife,
 And bury'd Seeds, by dying, spring to Life : 135
 What paints the Tulip, and the blushing Rose ;
 How from the Violet the fresh Odor flows :

How

How Cold congeals, and why ascends the Fire;
 Why Tides swell high, and less'ning Ebbs retire.
 Now to the Bottom of the boundless Deep 140
 Descends, where lowest Floods in silence sleep;
 The Wonders of the Watry World surveys,
 Thro' Coral-Groves, and Finny Nations strays:
 Now thro' the Windings of the cavern'd Earth
 Delighted roves; views Metals in their Birth; 145
 The hidden Crudities of Things explores;
 Views future Seas, e'er yet they beat their Shores;
 Rivers, which glide thro' subterraneous Caves,
 Before they mix their Streams with Ocean's Waves.
 Thro' the whole Moral Scheme his piercing Sight 150
 Directs, and views it in its native Light:
 Knows ev'n HIMSELF; knows what he *Was*, and *Is*;
 What in his *Former* State, and What in *This*:
 How rude Ideas in the Mind are wrought;
 How Thinking is perform'd, and What is Thought. 155
 What Soul, and Body are; How first combin'd,
 Why now divorc'd, and how to be rejoin'd.
 Sees thro' the Whole the great Creator spread,
 Reigning thro' All, the Living, and the Dead;
 (All live to Him) the Universal Whole 160
 By Him sustain'd; the Body, and the Soul;

Natures vast Frame: In Him All live, and move,
The vilest Worm below, the highest Saint above.

Nor This in Solitude; He roaming meets,
And with unutterable Pleasure greets 165

(Nor is to Him less Love by Them express'd)

Ten thousand Myriads of his Fellow Blest.

All join in sweet Society, and raise

Their Voices to th' Eternal Godhead's Praise.

To Them their Elder Brethren of the Sky, 170

The Angels, as thro' liquid Air they fly,

To execute th' Almighty's dread Commands,

Oft add themselves, and friendly touch their Hands.

And well they can delicious Converse hold

With Those high Spirits, tho' of purer Mold; 175

Since here on Earth their Tastes to heav'nly Good

Were always turn'd, and relish'd Angel's Food.

And now each Soul, of Substance more refin'd,

(Its airy Vehicle almost a Mind)

Objects agreeable can never want, 180

Nor any Joys its cumbrous Flesh could grant.

Yet in This blissful intermediate State

The last Perfection of their Bliss they wait:

Farther than This Possession Hope extends,

Sure Hope of Happiness which never ends, 185

Consum-

Consummate Happiness; when Flesh and Soul
 Shall re-unite, and be the former Whole;
 When Heav'n shall all the Just made perfect bless,
 And Hope in absolute Fruition cease.

But soft — We stand arrested in our Course: 190
 Objections here, of mighty Weight, and Force,
 Against These Suppositions, fancy'd Things,
 The bloated, or the meagre, Atheist brings.
 ATHEIST I stile him; for He's much the Same;
 Tho' chusing DEIST's somewhat milder Name. 200
 Speak then, dull Infidel, thy inmost Thought:
 Death's Nought, thou say'st, and after Death is Nought;
 A future State, vile Priestcraft's bugbear Theme,
 And all Reveal'd Religion is a Dream.
 But canst thou *prove* This? No; not, tho' 'twere true:
 But, as 'tis false; *Facts done* canst Thou *undoe*? 206
 Canst Thou by Logick, and Philosophy,
 What surely *is* demonstrate *not to be*?
 Did God (a Truth from All besides conceal'd)
 Reveal to Thee that Nothing is reveal'd? 210
 Was ever Spirit sent to Thee alone
 From t'other World, to tell thee there is None?
 This, Thou reply'st, is Contradiction all;
 So are thy Reas'nings, vain, proud Animal:

Which

* Which I (if Heav'n so far This Span prolong) 215
 Will prove by Argument, in Rhime, and Song,
 As Many have in Prose. Nor is't in Verse
 Unfit these Truths important to rehearse,
 These ferious, moral, theologic Things:
 Since, as the preaching Poet wisely sings, 220
 "A Verse may find Him who a Sermon flies, †
 "And turn Delight into a Sacrifice.

Mean while, What think'st thou? Was the human Soul,
 Which by a transient Glance from Pole to Pole
 Travels more swift than Light, to Heav'n sublime 225
 Can fly, descend to Hell, fix fleeting Time,
 The Past and Future to the Present join,
 And knows no Bounds which can Its Range confine,
 But INFINITE alone ———
 Which reasons justly, Its own Thoughts o'er-rules, 230
 And Fancy's Fire with Judgment's Temper cools;
 By Sciences brings hidden Truths to Light:
 Some Knowledge gains; but, with fresh Appetite,
 Unsatisfy'd, for more still thirsts, and pants,
 Knowing, the more It has, how much It wants; 235

** It is the Author's Design (if it shall please God to give him Life for it) after having finish'd the three remaining Parts of This Subject, The four last Things, I. To demonstrate, in Verse, the Necessity of Revelation in general; and the Truth and Excellence of the Christian Religion in particular. II. To display the Glory of God in his Works of 1 Creation, 2 Redemption, 3 Providence. III. To set forth the supereminent Dignity of the Holy Scriptures above all Human Writings.*

*O mihi tam longæ maneat pars ultima vitæ,
 Spiritus, & quantum sat erit Tua dicere Facta.*

† Herbert's Sacred Poems.

Was

Was by th' Almighty's Wisdom for no End
 Design'd, but Here a sad short Life to spend;
 Only to trifle sev'nty Years away
 In This frail Flesh, This Tenement of Clay,
 In Doubt, in Fear, in Sorrow, in Despair, 240
 Then cease to be, and vanish into Air?
 While various Species of th' inferior, brute
 Creation, void of Reason, prone, and mute,
 Beasts, Fishes, Birds, ev'n Vegetables, Trees,
 The Oke, the Eugh, and other Things like These, 245
 Senseless, inanimate, whole Ages last,
 After our longest Term of Days is past?
 Should One in Pow'r's mechanick most expert
 The utmost Efforts of his Skill exert,
 Some curious, delicate Machine to frame, 250
 Surpassing all his other Works of Fame;
 Yet so contriv'd, that one revolving Sun
 Should see This mighty Doing quite undone;
 The Wheels, and Springs stand still, and made to stand,
 Fix'd, disobedient to the Mover's Hand; 255
 Or, bursting, into Dissolution fly,
 And all dispers'd in useless Fragments lie:
 Would'st thou not say, that after such Expence
 Of Art, the Artist wanted Common Sense?

And shall *Eternal Wisdom* be impeach'd 260
 Of Folly, which no Mortal Fool e'er reach'd?
 But oh! a *Spirit*! Who That Word can hear,
 And form an Image *adequate*, and *clear*,
 Join'd to the *Sound*? Why; frankly I confess,
 I never *saw* a Spirit's Shape, or Drefs. 265
 Is there None therefore? Is, I ask, to Thee
 This Reas'ning just, Nought *is*, but what I *see*?
 No; But of Spirit, Thou wilt strait reply,
 Thou canst form no *Idea*: So can I.
 What? *Substance* without *Figure*? Yes; Why Not?
 Instead of *Figure*, 'tis endued with *Thought*. 271
 Can *Matter* think? Thy self wilt sure disown
 A thinking Piece of Timber, or of Stone.
 A thinking Piece of Flesh is just the same:
 Of Neither any Notion can we frame. 275
 That God's a Spirit, is a Truth most bright;
 For *Body* never can be *infinite*.
 If then *one* Spirit; why not Millions more?
 But granting there were None; Thy self explore.
 Thou art a *Man*; Thou think'st; Thy active Mind 280
 Can by no Bounds in Thinking be confin'd.
 And can it e'er in Reason be conceiv'd,
 Ev'n by an Infidel's large Faith believ'd,

That such a Substance, call it what thou list,
 Body, or Soul, was made but to exist 285
 For sev'nty Years, so very small a Space;
 And then in Being have no more a Place?
 Thou find'st thyself accountable Elsewhere
 For what thou do'st, and how thou suffer'st Here;
 Conscious of Praise, and Shame, of Good, and Ill, 290
 Lord of thy ev'ry Action, free in Will;
 Fit or for Heav'n's Reward, or vengeful Rod;
 For sure a DEIST's *Name* must own a God.
 And of *Hereafter's* Woe, and Bliss in store,
 Reason speaks much, but Revelation more. 295
That makes it probable; most certain, *This*:
 Be it that Nothing then but Matter *is*;
Matter, and *Motion* — Words you so much love:
 To Thee what Consolation will it prove,
 When damn'd in Hell, that, bound in fiery Chains, 300
 'Tis Nought but *Matter mov'd* that suffers *endless Pains*?
 Meditate then on Death to All decreed,
 And both Eternitys which must succeed.
Eternity! Immense, vast, boundless Sea!
 How are our Thoughts, tho' unconfin'd, and free, 305
 Confounded, lost, and swallow'd up in Thee!

Forever!

Forever! Never! Words of mighty Weight!
 Whene'er we muse on either future State!
 'Tis all an endless, infinite Abyfs;
 Whether we think on Misery, or Blifs: 310
 Added to Heav'n itself it turns our Brain,
 And makes ev'n Happiness almost a Pain.
 Yet 'twould be Pain indeed, did we possess
 That Happiness, to think it e'er could cease.
 But O! What Words—What Thoughts—Eternal Woe!
 What? Never end? No, Never. Mortal, shew 316
 Thyself a Man; Consider, and be Wise;
 Fear, tremble at the Death that never dies;
 The second Death—O Spare us, King of Heav'n;
 To Us repentant by Thy Pardon giv'n: 320
 Tho' for our Sins Thou justly art displeas'd,
 By our Repentance be Thy Wrath appeas'd:
 Most worthy Judge Eternal, hear our Pray'r;
 O Lord most Holy, God most Mighty, spare
 Thy suppliant Servants: Thou (in Thee we trust) 326
 Art Merciful, Great God, as well as Just:
 Suffer us not (whate'er Thy Will decree)
 For any Pains of Death to fall from Thee.

On This allotted Time, which soon must end,
 Th' Eternitys of Woe and Blifs depend. 330

That

That Life is vain, and short, we much complain;
 Must we then make it shorter, and more vain?
 'Tis short indeed, scarce worthy our Regard;
 If with Eternity it be compar'd.

Yet Life sufficient is by bounteous Heav'n 335

For all the Purposes of Living giv'n;
 For Here, and Hereafter — If too scant
 It prove, Ourselves alone have made That Want.
 So much of Life's liv'd, as is well employ'd;
 The rest is Death; at best a Chasm, and Void. 340
 Then give Thyself long Life, unthinking Man;
 By vertuous Industry extend thy Span.

Canst thou be ignorant that Some live more
 In twenty Years, than Others in fourscore?
 Time, fullen Thou complaine'st, flies too fast: 345
 Why so impatient then to have it past?

Suppose one fix its Fleetness — See, It stands —
 But lies it not a dead Weight on thy hands?

Ev'n as it flies, thou trifle'st it away
 In Visits, Dress, Impertinence, and Play; 350
 So diligently idle — Better far

Those Hours were spent in Thought, in Books, and Pray'r:
 Yet better they were spent in Sloth, than Vice;
 In Indolence, than Drink, and Lust, and Dice.

But I retract — For Sloth we justly call 355
One Vice ; And Mis'ry's the Result of *All*.
 Of This rich Talent *Time*, its Term expir'd,
 A strict Account will be by Heav'n requir'd:
 Be Thou a Niggard of thy Hours, and Days ;
 This only Avarice can merit Praise. 360

Who meditates on Death with wise Forethought,
 Will use This World as tho' he us'd it Not ;
 Regard Heav'n as his Home, and fix'd Abode,
 This World but as an Inn upon the Road.
 Another walking with Turmoil and Pain, 365
 In a vain Shadow, tires himself in vain.
 Why should we Covet what so soon we Leave ?
 Why Trust in That which surely will Deceive ?
 Why should'st thou Wealth amass ? O, 'twill be said
 The Man *dy'd Rich* ; That's Glory, when he's dead. 370
Dy'd Rich ? What Solecism ! Words Thus conjoin'd ?
Riches, and *Death* ? O Madness of Mankind !

Would strong Temptations thee to Vice enthrall
 By Pain, or Pleasure ? To thy succour call
 DEATH, and ETERNITY — That Thought disarms 375
 Pain of its Terrors, Pleasure of its Charms.
 DEATH and ETERNITY ! The Tyrant raves
 Unheeded ; Beauty makes no Fools, and Slaves.

What

Whate'er affects thee ; be it Good, or Ill ;

DEATH, and ETERNITY will triumph still. 380

To gilded Courts, and Palaces repair ;

Splendor and Vice enough will meet thee There.

DEATH, and ETERNITY ! Those Words repeat :

Seest thou not how the Glories of the Great

Shrink into Nothing ? Ev'n if There thou find 385

Goodness (how seldom seen !) with Greatness join'd.

But if 'tis the Reverse ; If Lust, and Pride,

And Avarice, and Folly, There preside,

And govern All ; If There a People's Fate

Hangs on one huge, enormous Tool of State, 390

Studious to make, by all vile Arts profest,

Of One a Tyrant, Vassals of the Rest ;

DEATH, and ETERNITY ! Does not That Sound

Their Wealth, and worthless Insolence confound ?

The Star upon their Breasts no longer gleams ; 395

Their Ribbands tarnish, Diamonds lose their Beams :

Swift vanishes their Pomp, their only Fame ;

As Demons fade at JESUS' dreaded Name.

They die ; and so do We : The Farce is o'er ;

Th' Oppressors frown, th' Oppress'd complain no more :

All in the same dull Track no longer run ; 401

Those to undoe, and These to be undone.

Envy'st

Envy'st thou Those Their Lot compar'd with Thine?
 Fret not thy self, nor at their Grandeur pine.
 Soon shall they be cut down, like rankest Weeds 405
 Wither, and rot — And Then oh! What succeeds?
 In *Us* it is not to foredoom their Fate;
 But let *THEM* think, and tremble, e'er too late.

By the same prudent Turn and Cast of Thought,
 Life's various Ills, and Troubles shrink to Nought. 410
 Grief Here indeed, and Toil we undergo;
 But what is That to Everlasting Woe?
 What is it, with Eternity compar'd?
 The Sinner's Punishment, the Saint's Reward?
 Think, Sinner, that thou may'st not persevere, 415
 How much more Pain is felt in Hell, than Here.
 Think, Saint, thy Perseverance to secure,
 How Heav'n o'erpays what we on Earth endure.
 This short imperfect State to all Mankind
 For Nothing, but Probation, was design'd; 420
 Pleasure, and Pain were only meant to prove
 Whether This World, or God, we chiefly love.

O Death! Thou certain Cure of human Ills;
 Why, tho' thy lifted Dart with Terror fills
 The Guilty Mortal, should the Good, and Wife 425
 Fear Thee, when He's not happy 'till he dies?

Great

Great Leveller! By Thee the King, the Slave;
 The Poor, the Rich, the Coward, and the Brave,
 The Wise, the Fool, the Wicked, and the Just,
 Are equal'd All — How equal'd? — In the Dust; 430
 Not otherwise: Beyond This short Life's End
 Thy Pow'r of Levelling cannot extend.
 Souls are distinguish'd, as They ever live;
 And Vice, and Vertue, That Distinction give:
 In That great Diff'rence Fortune has no share; 435
 Fortune, which makes so great a Diff'rence Here.
 The Wealthy may be wretched, blest the Poor;
 Yet let not *These* presume, or be secure:
 Let not by Them, thro' Poverty's vain Pride,
 The sacred Parable* be misapply'd: 440
 Millions of Beggars may be doom'd to Hell,
 And many Rich in *Abraham's* Bosom dwell.

The Wise, and Good, however, certain Bliss
 In the next Life awaits; and ev'n of This
 The Pains and Labours soon by Death must end: 445
 Why should They then fear Death, their healing Friend?
 No Troubles in the silent Grave molest:
 The Pris'ner's free, the Weary are at Rest.
 Releas'd from This vain World, which always lies
 Immers'd in Folly, Misery, and Vice, 450

* That of *Dives*, and *Lazarus*.

We There repose : Our Toils for ever cease ;
 And Knaves, and Fools no more disturb our Peace ;
 Chiefly That mingled Mass of Fools, and Knaves,
 Who *might* have Liberty, but *will* be Slaves,
 Who, stedfast to transgress right Reason's Rules,
 In spite of wisest Counsels *will* be Fools.
 Let Kings, their mighty Madness to display,
 As if of Human Race were None but They,
 Or They Above it, rouse War's dire Alarms,
 And plague the miserable World with Arms ;
 Spread Slaughter, Fire, and Ravage, all around,
 And Land, and Sea, and Right, and Wrong confound,
 With frightful Sieges Towns and Cities shake :
 We shall not hear the dismal Din they make ;
 Those Pests of Human Kind — But here forbears
 The serious Muse — What Portion shall be Theirs,
 Her present Theme directs her not to tell ;
 She Elsewhere sings of JUDGMENT, and of HELL.
 Happy indeed the Prince, who Reigns to Bless ;
 And is Himself a Nation's Happiness.
 Yet Death must not be Wish'd : Contented wait
 For thy Discharge ; whatever be thy Fate.
 Some, merely thro' Satiety of Life,
 Have long'd to die ; Some, 'tir'd with Care and Strife.

All

All This is Folly; nor without a Crime : 475
 Covet not Heav'n itself, before Heav'n's Time.
 'Twas great *Elijah's* Blemish, not his Praise,
 That he requested God to end his Days;
 But was This granted? Came Death at his Call?
 Far otherwise, He never dy'd at all. 480
 Tho' Frailty mingled with his human Frame;
 Yet, such his Piety's celestial Flame,
 He only (One except) was from to die
 Exempt, and **went not downwards to the Sky.*
 With Steeds and Chariot fiery like his Zeal, 485
 (This, Nought, as Those, could represent so well)
 Rapt in a Whirlwind, thro' the Starry Spheres
 He rides triumphant; After that, appears
 Many long Ages after, to recount
 Wonders unheard, on *Tabor's* holy Mount, 490
 With his effulgent Saviour — But what Views
 Are open'd Here? Descend, my devious Muse;
 Descend, whatever Fires within thee glow,
 From Heav'n, and *Tabor*, to This Earth below.

Whate'er Disasters, or Afflictions press; 495
 We must not call on Death for our Release.
 Let PATIENCE have her perfect Work; controul
 Each Mur'm'ring Thought; and calm the ruffled Soul.

* Cowley

In God's fight **PATIENCE** is of mighty Price; All This
 No Vertue shines more lovely in his Eyes. H not 500
 But whether more, or less, there's Cause to grieve,
 There's Cause abundant we should wish to live;
 T' adorn the Province Here to Us assign'd,
 To benefit our Friends, and all Mankind:
 To mourn our Sins, our Graces to improve, 505
 To flame, like Seraphim, in Zeal and Love:
 To gain in Heav'n a more sublime Reward (O) only H
 Ah! None for Heav'n can be too well prepar'd.
 Be it Thy constant Pray'r, and so pray I,
 "Let me live long, to be more fit to die." 510

However, None must with his *Post* to leave,
 'Till his *Discharge* he from his **CHIEF** receive:
 Let him be always ready to resign,
 When he is call'd; Yet not, meanwhile, repine;
 But, as commanded, chearfully obey. 515
 How desp'rate then, how lost, forlorn are They,
 Who by Self-Homicide! — Oh dreadful! dire!
 Such horrid Thoughts what Demon could inspire?
 For Them what Hope can after Death be had,
 Who, dying, God's Prerogative invade? 520
 Whose Death itself is Sin? He who gave Breath
 To All, has only Right to give them Death.

Ev'n

Ev'n holy *Job*, of Mortals most distressed,
 Tho' first extremest Anguish he express'd;
 Curs'd the unhappy Day that gave him Birth, 525
 And like hid Treasure sought to mix with Earth;
 More coolly thinking, Thus retracts his Crime:

"All, all the Days of my appointed Time,
 "Humbly resign'd, I will expect my Doom;
 "And wait with Patience, 'till my Change shall come. 530

Die to the World, while living: Thoughts divine
 Ev'n Here will Soul and Body half disjoin;
 So shall Those Friends with less Reluctance part,
 When in its last Convulsions heaves the Heart.

He who unwinds himself by just degrees 535
 From Life, dies easily: As *loosen'd* Trees
 Fall gently by a Storm, and ne'er bestrew
 With broken Limbs the Ground on which they grew.

Those Vertuous err, who, while they think on Death,
 Nothing but Gloominess, and Horror breathe; 540
 To blest Religion's Wrong and foul Disgrace,
 Draw a black Veil o'er Nature's lovely Face;
 To moaping Melancholy quite resign'd,
 And dismal all in Body, and in Mind.

Wise, and prepar'd to die, we, while we live, 545
 Enjoy Life most, and all that Life can give.

Our Conscience quiet, our Accounts wrote fair,
 With more Delight we breathe the Spring's fresh Air;
 Hear warbling Birds extend their little Throats,
 To glad the Ear with Nature's easiest Notes; 550
 Inviting Us with Them our Strains to raise,
 And celebrate the great Creator's Praise:
 With more Delight hear *Philomel's* soft Moans,
 And crystal Rills roll gurgling o'er the Stones;
 With greater Pleasure see the clust'ring Vine 555
 In Ringlets curl, and swell with promis'd Wine;
 (Let Wine be temperately us'd by All;
 The Thoughts of Death its Relish will not pall :)
 See the Carnation its sweet Pride display,
 Streaking its Leaves with various Colours gay; 560
 More pleas'd see all the Flow'rs that please the Eye,
 And smiling sigh, that We, like Them, must die.
 Rejoice, O Young Man, in thy Youth; Rejoice,
 But still with Innocence: Hear Nature's Voice,
 But Nature uncorrupt: Her Law obey, 564
 As subject to Reveal'd Religion's Sway.
 And That (so good, and bounteous is thy Lord)
 Will much more solid Joy, than Vice, afford:
 Only thy sinful Appetites restrain;
 The Thought of Death will never give thee Pain. 570

How

'Tis Pain indeed to curb Those Strong Desires;
 But greater far to burn in endless Fires.
 How will That Pain by Heav'n be overpay'd!
 By everlasting Happiness outweigh'd!

Nor be thy Soul beguil'd of Heav'n's Reward, 575
 By present, as with future Things compar'd.
 From a false Estimate 'twixt future Things,
 And present, Folly, Vice, and Mis'ry springs.
 Of *Future* Then we form a Notion just,
 (And to be blest, conceive it right we must) 580
 When with the Eye of Thought, and Faith, we see
 What *is not yet*, but *will most surely be*.
 What's *future* then is *certain*; Bliss, or Woe:
 And Both, as *future*, are *eternal* too.

Examine well thy *present moral* State; 585
 On That depends thy *future endless* Fate.
 If vicious it be found; close not thine Eyes,
 E'er thou Repent, Reform, be Good, and Wise.
 This very present Hour may prove thy last;
 And Then all Hope, and Remedy is past. 590

In fine; Let Death from Vice and Sin deter:
 The grand Result of All determines There.
 In ev'ry Storm, thy Safety to ensure,
 Those two great Anchors of the Soul secure,

FAITH,

FAITH, and REPENTANCE: Firm Supports are They; 595
 When ev'ry other fancy'd Prop, and Stay,
 The more thou leanest, sinks, and slides away.

Think often, in thy Days of Youth, and Health,
 'Midst flatt'ring Joys, Prosperity, and Wealth,
 And when with Fortune's various Troubles crost, 600
 What Thoughts *in Death* will *please*, or *grieve* thee most.
 More to be valued, as thou Then wilt rate,
 Is a good Conscience, than a good Estate.
 More terrible is Guilt's envenom'd Smart,
 Than all the Pangs that wring the dying Heart. 605

Sin brought forth Death; Death lives by Sin alone;
 The God-Man Saviour slew Death by his Own:
 Sin too He slew: Yet Both may be reviv'd
 By Us; tho' He for Us both dy'd, and liv'd.
 Death is by Him of Pow'r and Sting disarm'd; 610
 Nought in itself, but a vain Fantom arm'd;
 An impotent, tho' black, and hideous, Thing:
 But Think, Oh! Think; Sin still gives Death a Sting.

E R R A T A.

P. 16. l. 320. for *by* read *be*. P. 17. l. 337. read for *Hereafter*.



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